



United States Senate

NEWS RELEASE

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WATER RESOURCES BOLSTERED IN IDAHO

Water Resources Development Act projects approved

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Senate authorized a number of water projects for Idaho in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), H.R. 2864. Idaho Senators Larry Craig and Mike Crapo hailed its passage.

WRDA authorizes programs for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is generally passed every two years. However, the last WRDA bill Congress enacted was in 2000 when Crapo was chairman of the subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

“Passing this bill for the first time in over six years will finally provide needed money for critical water infrastructure projects for Idaho,” Crapo said. “These are important projects to both the livelihood of Idahoans and the future of our water resources.”

“Water projects made the West the livable place it is today. For Idaho’s future, it is important for these projects to be authorized and to get the ball rolling. As an appropriator, I will ensure that Idaho's interests and taxpayer dollars are protected as each project is funded,” said Craig.

WRDA projects in Idaho include:

Dworshak Reservoir Improvements – New construction and repairs and improvements to the existing recreational facilities at Dworshak Reservoir. Because of the lower pool requirements mandated for salmon recovery, the repairs are needed to ensure visitors can also enjoy the recreational opportunities at Dworshak. Total project cost is \$5.3 million, with \$3.9 million coming from federal tax dollars.

Little Wood River – Rehabilitation of the Gooding Idaho Channel Project for flood control and ecosystem restoration. Total cost of the project is \$9 million with the non-federal match coming from in-kind contributions, services, supplies, and materials.

Port of Lewiston – Lifts several restrictions and allows the use of fill material to raise some (non-wetland) low areas above flood elevation to meet project standards.

McNary Lock and Dam, McNary National Wildlife Refuge – Directs the Secretary of the Interior to have jurisdiction over the land acquired from the Fish and Wildlife Service for the McNary Dam Project.

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Snake River project – Authorizes studies and ecosystem restoration and improvements for fisheries and wildlife through changes to the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Plan for the Lower Snake River.

Eurasian Milfoil study – Eurasian milfoil is an invasive, aquatic weed that has become quite a nuisance in northern lakes, including Idaho. WRDA authorizes a national study, whose results will be applicable to Idaho, on how to control the weed.

The Bill will now go to a Senate-House conference committee to reconcile difference between the House-passed version and the Senate-passed version before final passage.